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310819Z Jan 02

CONFIDENTIAL PTQ5560

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00
	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00
	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	DCP-01
	NSAE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00
	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	R-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00
	SWCI-00	/010W					

-----5FDDFE 310831Z /38

FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0842
INFO NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 HARARE 000284

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
PARIS FOR NEARY
NAIROBI FOR PLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/30/12

TAGS: [PGOV PHUM ZI](#)

SUBJECT: A/S CRANER MESSAGE TO ZIMBABWE GOVERNMENT: YOU
ARE PULLING THE TRIGGER OF SANCTIONS

REF: 01 HARARE 3672

CLASSIFIED BY POLITICAL OFFICER TODD FAULK FOR REASONS:
1.5 (B) AND (D).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: BETWEEN JANUARY 15 AND 18, ASSISTANT
SECRETARY LORNE CRANER AND HIS DELEGATION MET WITH A

SIPDIS

WIDE SAMPLING OF ZIMBABWE GOVERNMENT, OPPOSITION AND
CIVIL SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVES. A/S CRANER INFORMED TWO
MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE (GOZ) THAT THE
ZIMBABWE LEADERSHIP IS IN THE PROCESS OF "PULLING THE
TRIGGER" OF US TRAVEL AND FINANCIAL RESTRICTIONS.
MEANWHILE, THE GOZ TRIED TO DOWNPLAY REPRESSIVE
LEGISLATION RECENTLY PASSED BY THE ZIMBABWE PARLIAMENT
AND HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY RULING PARTY SUPPORTERS.
OPPOSITION, CIVIL SOCIETY AND COMMERCIAL FARM
REPRESENTATIVES PAINTED A PICTURE OF A RAPIDLY
DETERIORATING HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION ON THE GROUND. THE
GROUPS WITH WHOM CRANER MET WERE DIVIDED ON THE OUTCOME
OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION SCHEDULED FOR MARCH AND ITS
AFTERMATH. END SUMMARY.

MESSAGE TO GOZ: YOU ARE PULLING THE TRIGGER

[1](#)2. (C) ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEMOCRACY,
HUMAN RIGHTS AND LABOR LORNE CRANER, HIS DEPUTY JOHN
SCOTT CARPENTER, S/P ADVISOR TOM CALLAHAN, AMBASSADOR
SULLIVAN AND POLOFF MET WITH SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT --
AND ZANU-PF SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION -- EMMERSON
MNANGAGWA, WHO WAS JOINED BY CLERK OF PARLIAMENT AUSTIN
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ZVOMA AND MFA U.S. DESK OFFICER RICHARD CHIBUWE. AFTER
INITIAL PLEASANTRIES, A/S CRANER POINTED OUT GROWING
U.S. CONCERN FOR THE DETERIORATING HUMAN RIGHTS
SITUATION IN ZIMBABWE AND THE RECENT PASSAGE OF
REPRESSIVE LEGISLATION BY PARLIAMENT. MNANGAGWA REPLIED
THAT VIOLENCE ON THE FARMS HAS DIMINISHED CONSIDERABLY
AND THAT THERE HAVE BEEN NO NEW FARM INVASIONS SINCE THE
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE "CLOSED" THE A1 RESETTLEMENT
SCHEME ON JULY 31, 2001. THAT MAY BE SO, CRANER
RETORTED, BUT THE LEVEL OF POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED
VIOLENCE UNRELATED TO THE LAND ISSUE APPEARS TO BE
INCREASING. THE SPEAKER BLAMED THE MDC FOR STARTING A
FEW ISOLATED INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE, TO WHICH ZANU-PF
YOUTHS RESPOND IN KIND. ADDITIONALLY, THE GOZ DOES NOT
HAVE "YOUTH BRIGADES" -- IT SPONSORS A NATIONAL YOUTH
SERVICE IN WHICH YOUTHS ARE TRAINED AND DEPLOYED FOR
COMMUNITY SERVICE IN CLINICS AND SCHOOLS. IT IS TRUE,
MNANGAGWA STATED, THAT THE POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE THEIR
OWN YOUTH WINGS, AND IT IS THEY WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR
THE VIOLENCE. REGARDING THE RECENTLY PASSED PUBLIC
ORDER AND SECURITY ACT (POSA), MNANGAGWA PUZZLED OVER
U.S. CONCERNS, SAYING THE LEGISLATION INCORPORATES

PROVISIONS FROM BRITISH AND SOUTH AFRICAN LAWS. A/S CRANER REPLIED THAT IT APPEARS THE POSA UTILIZES THE HARSHTEST ASPECTS OF THESE LAWS AND MADE THE POINT THAT NO ONE WORRIES TOO MUCH ABOUT THESE PROVISIONS THERE BECAUSE WHERE THE RULE OF LAW PREVAILS, HARSH PROVISIONS CAN BE CHALLENGED. IN ZIMBABWE, THAT IS NOT NECESSARILY THE CASE ANY LONGER.

13. (C) A/S CRANER STATED THAT WHEN A/S WALTER
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KANSTEINER MET WITH GOZ OFFICIALS LAST MONTH (REFTEL), HE SAID GOZ ACTIONS WOULD DETERMINE WHETHER THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION ENACTS TRAVEL AND FINANCIAL RESTRICTIONS ON ZIMBABWEAN LEADERS AS STIPULATED IN THE ZIMBABWE DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY ACT (ZDERA). SINCE THEN, THE USG HAS SEEN ONLY A DETERIORATION IN THE SITUATION IN ZIMBABWE; IN FACT, THE GOZ IS "PULLING THE TRIGGER" OF U.S. RESTRICTIONS THROUGH ITS FAILURE TO STEM POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND THE PASSAGE OF DRACONIAN LEGISLATION. MNANGAGWA REPLIED THAT THERE IS A GROWING ANTI-U.S. FEELING IN THE GOZ; THE ZDERA IS A U.S. QUID PRO QUO FOR BRITAIN'S SUPPORT IN THE WAR AGAINST TERRORISM; AND THE GOZ CAN ONLY ACT IN THE INTERESTS OF THE ZIMBABWEAN PEOPLE, NOT THOSE OF THE U.S. THE SPEAKER MAINTAINED THAT THE OLD LAW AND ORDER MAINTENANCE ACT, WHICH THE POSA REPLACED, PROVIDED FOR THE DEATH PENALTY FOR NINE OFFENSES -- THE POSA DOES FOR ONLY ONE, AND THAT THERE ARE NO POLITICAL PRISONERS IN ZIMBABWE, UNLIKE MANY OTHER COUNTRIES.

14. (C) THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS' UNDER SECRETARY FOR EUROPE AND AMERICAS GEORGE VENGENSA TOLD A/S CRANER THAT ZIMBABWE IS "ON TRACK" FOR A FREE AND FAIR ELECTION, A MESSAGE IT HAS BEEN DELIVERING TO ITS SADC PARTNERS. A/S CRANER REMARKED THAT DESPITE A HISTORY OF

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00
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	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	DCP-01
	NSAE-00	OTC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00
	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	R-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00
	SWCI-00	/010W					

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P 310819Z JAN 02
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0843
INFO NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 04 HARARE 000284

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
PARIS FOR NEARY
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/30/12
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: A/S CRANER MESSAGE TO ZIMBABWE GOVERNMENT: YOU ARE PULLING THE TRIGGER OF SANCTIONS

BUMPY RELATIONS, THE U.S. DOES CARE ABOUT ZIMBABWE AND
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THAT IT IS NOT IN LEAGUE WITH THE BRITISH TO UNDERMINE THE COUNTRY. HOWEVER, WE HAVE TO SAY THE PRACTICES IN ZIMBABWE TO DATE DO NOT FIT WITH THE DEMOCRATIC TRENDS OF THE REGION. BECOMING DEFENSIVE, VENGENSA STATED "HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT WHEN 57 OPPOSITION MPS WERE ELECTED IN 2000?" THE MFA OFFICIAL THEN DEMANDED TO KNOW WHY ZIMBABWE WAS BEING SINGLED OUT FOR SANCTIONS WHEN OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE SIMILAR PROBLEMS. "WHAT OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN SLAPPED WITH SANCTIONS IN THIS MANNER?" A/S CRANER RESPONDED THAT SOUTH AFRICA IN THE 1980S AND MORE RECENTLY SUDAN AND NIGERIA HAVE BEEN HIT WITH MORE DRACONIAN SANCTIONS FOR SERIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES. ZIMBABWE IS GETTING OFF RELATIVELY EASILY AS THE ZDERA PROVIDES FOR MORE INCENTIVES THAN RESTRICTIONS. A/S CRANER ALSO DELIVERED THE USG MESSAGE TO VENGENSA, AS HE DID TO MNANGAGWA, THAT THE GOZ IS "SQUEEZING THE TRIGGER" OF SANCTIONS. VENGENSA GLUMLY STATED THAT HE WOULD PASS ON THE MESSAGE TO MORE SENIOR GOZ OFFICIALS.

IMPACT OF ZDERA

15. (C) A NUMBER OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND OPPOSITION REPRESENTATIVES WITH WHOM THE CRANER DELEGATION MET COMMENTED ON THE ZDERA. CHAIRMAN REGINALD MATCHABA-HOVE AND NATIONAL COORDINATOR RINDAI CHIPFUNDE OF THE ZIMBABWE ELECTION SUPPORT NETWORK (ZESN), AN UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION OF ZIMBABWE NGOS, OPINED THAT THE ZDERA AND THREAT OF EU SANCTIONS HAD SOMEWHAT SOFTENED THE GOZ'S
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HARSH ATTITUDE TOWARD THE WEST. IN THEIR OPINION, THE U.S. RESPONSE SHOULD BE ROBUST, AND AN INCREMENTAL APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS ON LEADERS WOULD BE MOST EFFECTIVE. THE ZESN CHIEFS ALSO NOTED THAT SOME ZIMBABWEANS STILL BELIEVE THAT THE ZDERA IMPOSES ECONOMIC SANCTIONS ON ZIMBABWE; MORE PUBLIC STATEMENTS OR EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL ON THE LAW WOULD HELP STEM THE CONFUSION. MARY NDLOVU, A TRUSTEE OF THE LEGAL RESOURCES FOUNDATION NGO, WAS MORE POINTED AND SAID ZIMBABWEANS WANT TO SEE THEIR LEADERS PUNISHED. "WHY IS IT TAKING SO LONG TO ENACT?" SHE ASKED RHETORICALLY. PAUL TEMBA-NYATHI, THE MDC'S ELECTIONS DIRECTOR, DIFFERED BY SAYING ANY ZDERA RESTRICTIONS SHOULD BE IMPOSED IMMEDIATELY TO LET THE GOZ KNOW THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY FINDS ITS ACTIONS UNACCEPTABLE. "WOULD THIS NOT LEAD TO A STATE OF EMERGENCY BEFORE THE ELECTION?" THE AMBASSADOR ASKED. NO, A DE FACTO STATE OF EMERGENCY ALREADY EXISTS, TEMBA-NYATHI OPINED.

CATALOGUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES GROWING

16. (C) THE CRANER DELEGATION, ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN AND POLOFF, TRAVELED ABOUT 100 KM SOUTHEAST OF HARARE TO CHIPESA FARM, WHICH IS OWNED BY MDC ACTIVISTS IAN AND KERRY KAY. GATHERED AT THE FARM WERE TWO OTHER COMMERCIAL FARMERS, FIVE FARM WORKERS, AND A RESETTLED BLACK FARMER. THE FARM WORKERS MATTER-OF-FACTLY DESCRIBED THE NIGHTLY BEATINGS THEY RECEIVE WITH WHIPS AND CHAINS BY ZANU-PF YOUTHS, THE BURNING DOWN OF THEIR
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HOMES, AND THE CONSTANT HARASSMENT AND DEATH THREATS. ONE WORKER HAD PHOTOGRAPHS OF HIS BACK WHERE HE HAD BEEN STRUCK FOUR TIMES WITH AN AX. THEIR CHILDREN DON'T GO TO SCHOOL AND OTHER CO-WORKERS ARE SO FEARFUL THAT THEY SLEEP IN THE BUSH FOR WEEKS AT A TIME. ALL THE WHILE THEY ARE TOLD TO STOP WORKING FOR THE KAYS AND TO VOTE FOR ZANU-PF. MOST OF THE ZANU-PF YOUTH ARE BROUGHT IN FROM HARARE OR FAR-AWAY COMMUNAL FARMS. THEY RECENTLY COLLECTED 10 OLDER CHILDREN FROM THE FARM FOR TRAINING AT THE BORDER GEZI NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE TRAINING CENTER NEAR MOUNT DARWIN. THE KAYS STATED THAT THE INTIMIDATION IS DESIGNED BY ZANU-PF TO FORCE THEIR WORKERS TO LEAVE SO THAT THEIR FARM GOES OUT OF BUSINESS AND THEY CAN NO LONGER SUPPORT THE MDC. THE GOZ SEES THEM AS A THREAT.

17. (C) THE RESETTLED BLACK FARMER LAID BARE THE GOZ'S CLAIMS THAT ITS LAND RESETTLEMENT SCHEME IS FOR THE BENEFIT OF "THE PEOPLE." HE STATED THAT HE HAS LIVED AND WORKED ON NEARBY LAND MADE AVAILABLE TO HIM BY THE GOZ IN 1984. HE HAD DONE WELL RAISING MAIZE BY APPLYING HIMSELF AND HIS SKILLS. HOWEVER, THIS YEAR, ZANU-PF SUPPORTERS BURNED ALL HIS CROPS TO "MAKE AN EXAMPLE" OUT OF HIM FOR HIS VILLAGE. APPARENTLY HIS TRADING TIES WITH THE KAYS WERE GROUNDS FOR BEING TARGETED. TARCY

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ACTION AF-00

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	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	DCP-01
	NSAE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00
	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	R-00
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P 310819Z JAN 02
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0844
INFO NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR FRAZER
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SUBJECT: A/S CRANER MESSAGE TO ZIMBABWE GOVERNMENT: YOU
ARE PULLING THE TRIGGER OF SANCTIONS

ZIMBITI, ACTING DIRECTOR OF THE CATHOLIC COMMISSION FOR
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JUSTICE AND PEACE (CCJP), IN A SEPARATE MEETING, SAID
ZANU-PF IS GOING AS FAR AS BEATING UP ITS OWN SUPPORTERS
SO IT CAN SAY THE MDC IS PERPETRATING VIOLENCE.

18. (C) SEVERAL INTERLOCUTORS, INCLUDING HIGH COURT
JUSTICE FERGUS BLACKIE, TOLD THE CRANER DELEGATION THAT
THE GOZ INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF POLITICAL
VIOLENCE CASES HAS BEEN HIGHLY SELECTIVE. MANY TIMES
THE HIGH COURT HAS POINTED OUT TO THE MINISTRY OF
JUSTICE, WHICH CONDUCTS PROSECUTIONS, WHO SHOULD BE
ARRESTED AND PROSECUTED FOR POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED
CRIMES. WHENEVER ZANU-PF SUPPORTERS ARE INVOLVED,
USUALLY NOTHING IS DONE; HOWEVER, IF SOMEONE FROM THE
MDC CAN BE BLAMED, THOSE CASES ARE MOVED TO THE FRONT OF
THE COURT DOCKET, BLACKIE AND JUSTICE MOHAMED ALI ADAM
REMARKED.

REPRESSIVE LEGISLATION IS PART OF THE PLAN

19. (C) A COMMON TOPIC IN A/S CRANER'S MEETINGS WAS THE
RECENTLY PASSED PUBLIC ORDER AND SECURITY ACT (POSA) AND
GENERAL LAWS AMENDMENTS ACT, WHICH ALTERED THE ELECTORAL
ACT IN ZANU-PF'S FAVOR. THE ZESN REPRESENTATIVES SAID
THE ELECTORAL ACT, AS AMENDED, REQUIRES ALL VOTER
EDUCATION TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE ELECTORAL SUPERVISORY
COMMISSION (ESC). IT ALSO GIVES THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL,
WHO IS REGARDED AS A ZANU-PF SYMPATHIZER, MORE CONTROL
OVER THE ELECTORAL PROCESS AND COULD CREATE MORE
OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOTE-RIGGING. ZESN SAID IT IS
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IMPORTANT TO POINT OUT THAT THE AMENDMENTS DO NOT "BAN
THE MDC" OR "BAN NGOS" AS SOME PRESS REPORTS WOULD HAVE
IT, BUT THEY DO PLACE GREATER RESTRICTIONS ON THE
ACTIVITIES OF THE OPPOSITION AND CIVIL SOCIETY. TARCY
ZIMBITI OF THE CCJP SAID THAT BECAUSE OF THE VOTER
EDUCATION RESTRICTIONS, HIS ORGANIZATION IS NOW
DESCRIBING ITS EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AS "SOCIAL
TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH" AS AN (UNTESTED) WAY AROUND THE
NEW LAW. MATCHABA-HOVE OF ZESN REMARKED THAT THE
CHURCHES ARE NOW THE ONLY PRACTICAL VEHICLE FOR VOTER
EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE SINCE 75 PERCENT OF ZIMBABWEANS
ARE CHURCH-GOING CHRISTIANS.

110. (C) THE POSA IS A MATTER OF CONCERN FOR ZESN
MEMBERS IN THE WAY IT COULD BE USED TO LIMIT CAMPAIGNING
FOR POLITICAL PARTIES AND FOR GENERAL VOTER EDUCATION.
PEARSON NHERERE, A PROMINENT ATTORNEY AND TRUSTEE OF THE
LEGAL RESOURCES FOUNDATION (LRF), STATED THAT THE POSA
"SEVERELY RESTRICTS PUBLIC GATHERINGS, WHETHER THEY BE
ON THE STREET OR IN A BUILDING." ASKED BY PDAS
CARPENTER WHY ZANU-PF HAD SO FAR FAILED TO PASS THE
DRACONIAN ACCESS TO INFORMATION BILL AND LABOR RELATIONS
AMENDMENT BILL, NHERERE STATED THAT THOSE BILLS ARE PART
OF ZANU-PF'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR STAYING IN POWER AND
PROVIDE LITTLE ADDED BENEFIT FOR THIS ELECTION. THEY
CONTAIN PROVISIONS THAT WOULD NOT BRING THEM INTO EFFECT
UNTIL THREE MONTHS AFTER THEIR PASSAGE; THE ELECTION IS
ALREADY LESS THAN SIX WEEKS AWAY. APOLITICAL
ORGANIZATIONS LIKE THE NATIONAL AIDS COUNCIL ARE
CANCELING OUTREACH PROGRAMS OUT OF FEAR OF BEING
PROSECUTED UNDER THE NEWLY PASSED POSA, ACCORDING TO
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MARY NDLOVU OF LRF.

THE ELECTION

111. (C) IN MEETING WITH ESC CHAIRMAN SOBUSA GULA-
NDEBELE (A GOZ APPOINTEE), A/S CRANER NOTED THAT THE
STANDARD FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS IS A GLOBAL ONE --
NOT JUST AN AMERICAN OR BRITISH ONE -- AND ASKED FOR THE

CHAIRMAN'S ASSESSMENT OF WHERE THE ESC STANDS ON PREPARING FOR THE MARCH 2002 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. GULA-NDEBELE IMPLIED THAT THE ESC WAS BEHIND SCHEDULE IN ITS PREPARATIONS AND IT WOULD BE A "RUSH" JOB TO FIND AND TRAIN ALL THE ELECTION MONITORS IT NEEDS; BUT HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CONDUCTING THE ELECTION, WHEREAS THE ESC MERELY SUPERVISES THEM. IN HIS ONLY MILD CRITICISM OF THE GOZ, THE CHAIRMAN COMPLAINED THAT THE ESC HAS NOT BEEN GIVEN ENOUGH RESOURCES TO DO ITS JOB. IT WOULD NEED AN ADDITIONAL ZIM\$500 MILLION (US\$1.72 MILLION) TO CARRY OUT ITS MISSION PROPERLY, HE STATED.

112. (C) IN RESPONDING TO USG CONCERNS, GULA-NDEBELE STATED THAT IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR ANY ONE TO

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	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	R-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00
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P 310819Z JAN 02
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0845
INFO NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 04 OF 04 HARARE 000284

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
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SUBJECT: A/S CRANER MESSAGE TO ZIMBABWE GOVERNMENT: YOU ARE PULLING THE TRIGGER OF SANCTIONS

TAMPER WITH BALLOT BOXES AFTER ELECTION POLLING -- PARTY
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AGENTS AND ESC MONITORS WOULD BE WITH THE BOXES AT ALL TIMES UNTIL THE VOTES ARE COUNTED. THE BOXES ARE GUARDED OVERNIGHT AFTER THE FIRST DAY OF VOTING, AND THEY ARE NOT MOVED TO THE COUNTING CENTERS UNTIL AFTER THE POLLING STATIONS ARE CLOSED ON THE SECOND DAY. ARMED POLICE, ACCOMPANIED BY THE PARTY AGENTS AND MONITORS, TAKE THE BOXES TO THE COUNTING CENTERS, WHERE THE VOTES ARE COUNTED, UNCLEARLY MARKED BALLOTS EXAMINED, AND SPOILED BALLOTS TABULATED. THE CHAIRMAN COMMENTED THAT THE DECEMBER CHEGUTU MAYORAL ELECTION IN WHICH THE MDC CANDIDATE WON SHOWED THAT THERE IS NO VOTE MANIPULATION. THE AMBASSADOR NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT A HIGH NUMBER OF SPOILED BALLOTS COULD SKEW THE RESULTS, TO WHICH GULA-NDEBELE REPLIED THAT THE NUMBER IS NORMALLY VERY LOW. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS THAT THE NUMBER OF POLLING STATIONS HAS DECREASED IN RECENT ELECTIONS (THEREBY MAKING VOTER PARTICIPATION MORE DIFFICULT), GULA-NDEBELE CLAIMED THAT THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASE IN POLLING STATIONS IN RURAL AREAS, AND THAT THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE SAYS THERE SHOULD BE MORE THERE.

113. (C) ZESN'S NATIONAL COORDINATOR STATED THAT BY HOLDING THE HARARE MAYORAL ELECTION AT THE SAME TIME AS THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, THE GOZ INTENDS TO DRAW MDC MONITORS AWAY FROM ZANU-PF STRONGHOLDS IN THE RURAL AREAS. THERE COULD ALSO BE SOME CONFUSION OVER WHICH BALLOT GOES IN WHICH BOX, WHICH COULD BENEFIT ZANU-PF. THE FARM WORKERS AT CHIPESA FARM SAID THAT DESPITE THE INTENSE INTIMIDATION IN RURAL AREAS, PEOPLE ARE NOT AFRAID TO VOTE, NOR DO THEY INTEND TO VOTE FOR ZANU-PF. MDC VICE-PRESIDENT GIBSON SIBANDA, IN A SEPARATE

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MEETING, ECHOED THIS REFRAIN, SAYING PEOPLE ARE DETERMINED TO VOTE AND THAT THEY HAVE ALREADY MADE UP THEIR MINDS TO VOTE FOR MDC. EVEN THOUGH THERE IS NO HOPE OF A FREE AND FAIR ELECTION, IT IS NOT EVEN AN OPTION UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE MDC TO BOYCOTT THE ELECTION, SIBANDA ADDED.

NO CONSENSUS ON ELECTION OUTCOME OR AFTERMATH

14. (C) WHEN ASKED ABOUT WHO IS LIKELY TO WIN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, MOST OF THE DELEGATION'S INTERLOCUTORS WERE DIVIDED. MDC ELECTIONS DIRECTOR TEMBA-NYATHI STATED THAT HE HAD TO REMAIN OPTIMISTIC THAT MORGAN TSVANGIRAI WOULD PREVAIL DESPITE THE TREMENDOUS OBSTACLES. LOCALLY WELL-KNOWN POLITICAL COMMENTATORS, INCLUDING CRISIS IN ZIMBABWE CHAIRMAN BRIAN RAFTOPOLOUS, TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL CHAIRMAN JOHN MAKUMBE, TRANSPARENCY DIRECTOR ANDREW NONGOGO, AND ZIMBABWE LIBERATORS PLATFORM CHAIRMAN WILFRED MHANDA, COULD NOT AGREE ON WHO THE ULTIMATE WINNER WOULD BE. MHANDA WAS ADAMANT THAT PRESIDENT MUGABE WOULD DO ABSOLUTELY ANYTHING TO WIN THE ELECTION REGARDLESS OF THE CONSEQUENCES, WHEREAS NONGOGO ARGUED THAT MUGABE STILL VALUES THE LEGITIMACY THAT AN ELECTION CONVEYS AND WOULD NOT BLATANTLY RIG THE VOTE, EVEN IF IT MEANT RISKING A LOSS.

15. (C) ON THE ELECTION AFTERMATH, A SINGLE SCENARIO DID NOT EMERGE, BUT VIOLENCE WAS THE MOST COMMON
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INGREDIENT. A/S CRANER RELAYED TO THE MDC LEADERSHIP THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WAS COUNTING ON THE MDC TO CHANNEL ZIMBABWEANS' ANGER IF THE ELECTION WERE STOLEN. SEKAI HOLLAND, THE MDC'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SECRETARY, COMMENTED THAT IT IS GETTING MORE DIFFICULT TO CONTROL YOUTHS AND OTHERS WHO ARE INCREASINGLY DETERMINED TO RETALIATE IN THE FACE OF ZANU-PF'S INTIMIDATION. SIBANDA SAID THE MDC LEADERSHIP WOULD DO ITS BEST TO RESTRAIN THE PARTY'S SUPPORTERS, BUT HE FULLY EXPECTS THE MDC YOUTH TO DEFEY THE LEADERSHIP'S CALLS FOR RESTRAINT IF THE MDC LOSES. TARCY ZIMBITI OF THE CCJP SAID IF TSVANGIRAI WINS, THE COUNTRY COULD PLUMMET INTO A LOW-INTENSITY CIVIL WAR WHERE RESETTLED FARMERS REFUSE TO GIVE UP LAND GIVEN TO THEM BY ZANU-PF; ALTERNATIVELY, IF MUGABE WINS, HE EXPECTS THE HIGH-DENSITY SUBURBS TO ERUPT IN VIOLENCE.

16. (U) A/S LORNE CRANER AND PDAS SCOTT CARPENTER CLEARED THIS MESSAGE.

SULLIVAN

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